

# New Automated Recycling Pilot Program: Frequently Asked Questions

Effective mid-March 2009, approximately 10,000 Houston residents will be able to participate in a new Automated Recycling Pilot Program. Here are some common questions we anticipate regarding this new service. If you do not find an answer to your question here, please contact 3-1-1 or visit [www.houstonsolidwaste.org](http://www.houstonsolidwaste.org).

### Why is this new recycling program being implemented?

Houston residents currently utilize what is commonly referred to as “single-stream” recycling. This type of recycling allows customers to mix recyclable paper, corrugated cardboard, plastic and aluminum cans in one container. Customers will still be able to commingle recyclables, however, collection will change from manual bin collection to an automated cart-based collection. In addition, we will now accept glass bottles and jars. Automated collection reduces costs because collection routes are serviced more efficiently and worker injuries decrease.

### How often will recycling be collected?

Collection will be bi-weekly, just like the current 18-gallon green bin system. Please have your cart out to the curb by 7am the day of collection.

### What do I have to do?

You will be provided a 96-gallon green automated cart for your recyclables. We are requesting that you use these carts to recycle. These carts are much larger than the previous recycling bins and will allow residents to dispose of five times more recycling material than the 18-gallon bins. Also, the carts roll easily to the curb and have a lid to contain items and keep them from getting wet.

### What about used motor oil?

Used oil will be collected; however, it must be placed outside the recycling cart in a screw top, non-chemical container. The container can be one gallon maximum. Due to the limited space on the collection vehicle, please limit your quantities to no more than three containers per household.

### What items cannot go in the cart?

Please remember this is NOT a trash can. No garbage, yard trimmings, trash, food or hazardous waste should be placed in the cart. No plastic bags, meat trays, pizza boxes, styrofoam or broken glass can be accepted because of contamination. Only those items indicated on the cart lid are acceptable.

### What if my cart is lost or stolen?

A police report must be filed in order to obtain a replacement cart.

## What items can go in the cart?

### \*Magazines



### \*Newspaper

### \*Catalogs

### \*Corrugated Cardboard (flattened)



### \*Phonebooks



### \*Plastic containers 1 through 7 (rinsed and drained)



### \*Aluminum and tin cans (rinsed and drained)



### \*Glass bottles, jugs and jars (rinsed and drained)



### Why can't I place plastic bags in the cart for collection?

Plastic bags jam the automated machinery at the processing facility. Residents can take their plastic bags to some grocery stores or other local stores and place them in their containers for recycling. The Westpark Consumer Recycling Center located at 5900 Westpark also accepts clean, litter free plastic grocery and film bags.

### What if my paper gets wet since it's commingled with other items?

We do ask that you empty and rinse all your containers to keep food contamination out of your bin. A minimum amount of moisture will not ruin the paper. Quality control audits will be conducted to keep down levels of contamination. Residents found to place large amounts of unacceptable material in their individual carts run the risk of having the carts removed.

### Can I get more than one cart?

Since this is a pilot program, only one cart will be issued per household. Please note each cart will have a serial number and will be assigned to an individual address.

### Is there a fee to participate in the program?

This is a pilot program initiated by the City of Houston. There is no fee to participate, however, audits will be conducted to determine participation rates of individual neighborhoods. Carts not being used for recycling will be collected by Solid Waste Management personnel.

### What are some of the anticipated advantages of this new pilot recycling program?

- \*The program makes it easier for residents to recycle; thereby increasing recycling and helping the City divert waste from landfills.
- \*Collection costs are reduced because collection is automated.
- \*Collection routes are serviced more efficiently.
- \*Worker injuries are expected to decrease because of automated collection.
- \*Glass will be collected.

### What are some of the anticipated disadvantages of this new program?

The larger bin may encourage residents to put everything that seems recyclable in it. This is why we need your help in remembering that this is not a trashcan. Customers must be conscientious recyclers to make the program a success.

### Where can I go for more info?

You can call 3-1-1 or visit our website at [www.houstonsolidwaste.org](http://www.houstonsolidwaste.org).

**A list of the items that can go in the cart is printed on the cart lid for your convenience. This new service will allow you to recycle glass, which was not previously collected curbside.**

Schedule A ☒

# Automated Recycling Pilot Program

Bi-Weekly Collection Schedule

Schedule B ☐

March 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

September 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

October 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

January 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

May 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

February 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						



Please refer to the back of this brochure for your specific collection day.  
If your collection day is during the "A Week" then follow the schedule for the shaded week.  
Ex: Thursday A service days in April 2009: April 9th & 23rd.  
If your collection day is during the "B Week", you will follow the unshaded week's schedule.  
Ex: Thursday B service days in April 2009: April 2, 16, and 30th.

☐ 2009 Holiday Schedule ( No Collection). For SWMD holiday schedule, visit [www.houstonsolidwaste.org](http://www.houstonsolidwaste.org).



More Information Inside

Dear Resident,

Your neighborhood has been selected to be a part of our new Automated Recycling Pilot Program! We are so excited to include you in this pilot program.

Participants in the new Automated Pilot Recycling Program will receive a 96 gallon green cart (similar to the black automated garbage can) for recycling collection.

With the automated carts, you will find it more convenient to store more recyclables in one container. Also, because the cart has wheels, residents can bring their recyclables to the curb in one easy trip! The City of Houston will take the materials to a private facility where the different types of recyclables are separated and shipped for market reuse.

Your participation and feedback are critical to the success of this pilot program. Your cart has a serial number so it needs to remain at your address.

We thank you for your continued support in making Houston a cleaner, greener place to live.

  
Harry J. Hayes, Director  
City of Houston  
Solid Waste Management Dept.



HOUSTON...  
A CLEANER, GREENER PLACE TO LIVE.



CITY OF HOUSTON  
BILL WHITE, MAYOR



HARRY J. HAYES, DIRECTOR  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPT.

YOUR AUTOMATED RECYCLING  
PICK-UP DAY WILL BE

Visit [www.houstonsolidwaste.org](http://www.houstonsolidwaste.org), or the City of Houston Customer Service Hotline at 3-1-1 for additional information.



# ROLL WITH RECYCLING!

## Automated Recycling Pilot Program...

It's Convenient, Clean and Efficient!

# Recycle More, Waste Less!



Reusette Wisely!

# HOUSTON RECYCLES